

LEVEL  
ONE

# THE EAST & WEST REVIEW

*An Anglican Missionary Quarterly*

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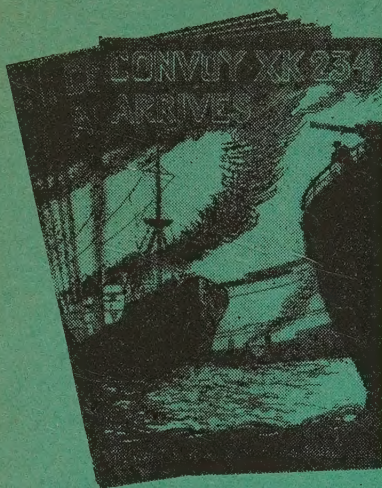
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*An Anglican Missionary Quarterly*

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**Volume XIII**

**JULY, 1947**

**Number 3**

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# COMMENTS ON EDUCATION IN EAST AFRICA

By G. C. TURNER\*

**W**ITH the establishment of law and order colonial administration has passed beyond the pioneering stage, and the function of Government has become educational in a broad sense. As an agent of education Government is faced everywhere in tropical Africa with the same basic problem, and this may be seen either in a negative or in a positive way; just as the special task of the medical services may be seen either as the prevention of disease or as the promotion of positive health. In its negative aspect, the general task of Government is to prevent social and moral collapse among people whose customary sanctions, both religious and social, are being undermined by Western ideas, and the structure of whose society, in its traditional form of the static and defensive tribal unit, is being shaken to pieces by the impact of a new economy. But since all effective preservation demands new construction, the problem is best defined in its constructive aspect, as the challenge to stimulate African society to adapt itself to absorb new shocks, and to develop in the individual African the confidence and the independence of judgment to show the way to this adaptation.

It is tempting to try to follow Plato and to see the greater in terms of the less: to suggest that, as in a school the headmaster is mainly concerned with providing suitable moral and material environment for the pupils' growth, while his assistants have more special duties, so the Administration has a general responsibility in its political, legal and financial functions, while the special departments are concerned with more particular aspects of social growth and welfare. It is certainly true that school education can be rightly seen only as part of a wider co-operative process; and that in studying the unit of education, the school, the most illuminating analogy is found in the far larger political unit of society. And in Africa further cross-reference must often be made, since the complicated stress of new stimulus and external impact bears equally hardly upon the individual and upon the society of which he is a member; and the predicament and prognosis of either are best understood by reference to those of the other.

The chief impression left upon my mind after seven years' residence in East Africa, with much travel in all its territories, is of great variety. The native population is as various as the remarkable natural scenery; and history has added further variation, in the different political status of each dependency, in the various immigrants from Europe and Asia who have settled in East Africa for agriculture, trade or commerce, or just to avoid restriction and discomfort elsewhere, and in the wide

\* Mr. G. C. Turner, C.M.G., was Master of Marlborough, then Principal of Makerere College, East Africa, and is now Headmaster of Charterhouse.

variety, both of outlook and of nationality, of the missionary agents of Christianity. In this variegated picture I see only two shades of monotone for a background, the even tradition and temper of our British administration and the still pervasive poverty of African life.

Although the concern of Governments with education and the amount of public money and service given to its support are steadily growing, the great bulk of the African schools in East Africa is still owned and staffed by the Christian Missions.

To the Christian missionary, wherever he is placed, his work is primarily evangelistic, and the Missions must regard their schools and training centres first of all as means for spreading the Gospel, next in importance only to their churches. But while this view is accepted, their position as the principal agents of education gives the Missions also a large public and social responsibility, and an important share in the general task of African development. I suggest several points at which their help is most urgently needed.

(1) *The School and the Home.* African tradition of home nurture and education is indigenous, a part of leisurely peasant life, while schooling is an alien importation. There is a wide gap between the two, and the first task of education is to bridge it. For most of the children who attend elementary or primary day-schools the routine and habits of home make no concession to the demands of school. They accept a double life of which the two parts are incompatible, and their loss of vigorous growth for lack of proper food, rest and discipline is very great. Parents feel that their duty is done with the payment of school fees and resign the care of their children into other hands. "You are his father and his mother" said an African father, when I suggested that his student son needed some help and encouragement from home.

There is great need of closer contact between school and home: for the teachers in day-schools to extend their duty and interest beyond school hours and premises, and to help parents to understand that the real benefit of their children's schooling depends upon their own co-operation. And in the sphere of teaching, more effort should be made to start from what the children know of nature and society, so that their attention is not narrowed at school, cut off from the world they live in and concentrated wholly on the blackboard, the text-book and the teacher's voice.

On a long view, the main social value of education is in training the parents of the next generation, and here the education of girls, so much hampered by social custom and masculine pride of place, has special importance: but it needs great tact, since the lot of the progressive mother in an African home is far from easy. Meanwhile the greatest social service of Christian missionaries is their encouragement of the Christian home, based upon a new idea of parental responsibility for the proper care of children who are growing up into a world of rapid change. I believe this is the true approach to monogamy, away from the more primitive and economic conception of marriage, and much more effective in the long run than the threat of religious sanctions against polygamy, which leads to much hypocrisy and confusion of sexual morality at present.



(2) *The Training of Character and Judgment.* The misleading idea, still quite common, that the training of character and of intelligence are somehow separate, is especially dangerous in Africa. For the African world, with its close and narrow contacts and its defensive attitude to the unknown, is still full of suspicion and fear, moods which prompt an emotional reaction to every circumstance and the uncritical acceptance of crude ideas and attractive catchwords. The intelligent application of moral principle is everywhere needed, and this requires the education of mind and character together, religion and faith which will outlast childhood and grow with the growing man, and an active intelligence which will not cease to study and to learn when schooldays are past. In this regard, either of two defects is common in Mission schools: on the one hand, too much information and instruction, with strong pressure to industry and obedience but with little stimulus to enterprise and thought; and on the other, an excess of moral precept and homily, with insufficient presentation of the faith and discipline upon which Christian conduct must be based.

The boarding-school offers obvious and favourable ground for training in personal and social virtue, and this is energetically used. But I believe that the forms of school society and the manner and accommodation of its social life are often too closely copied from European models which have grown from very different social and domestic traditions. There is room for new experiment here. But it is in the day schools, which receive the great majority of African schoolchildren, that the need of more training of character is most apparent. The difficulty of supplying it is great. School hours are short, and many children get tired and hungry as they pass: the variety of activity must be small and its accommodation very simple. To make the best use of their limited opportunity, the teachers need much more skill and resourcefulness than any but a few of them possess, and they must be supported, as has been suggested, by a much stronger sense in parents and in the whole African community that the welfare of the schools and of their children in them is largely a matter for their own concern.

(3) *The Supply and Training of Teachers.* More education means more teachers and better education means better teachers. African education should be both more and better, but until it is better, it cannot profitably be much more. The primary schools cannot be much improved until their teachers have had secondary education and then good professional training, and I am convinced that the improvement and extension of secondary schooling and of teacher-training is the necessary pre-requisite for any substantial advance of education in all the East African territories. Both are expensive, since all teacher-training centres and, except in the few large towns, all secondary schools must be boarding establishments. Besides the inadequacy of the accommodation now available in both, nearly all the existing institutions are too small either for good teaching or for economic running. I believe that a good part of the funds allotted to education, under the scheme of Colonial Development and Welfare can most profitably be used to establish and staff larger schools and training centres. To prime the educational pump, the first need is still for

competent European staff, and especially for apt and able men and women to take charge of schools and colleges. The need, the opportunity and the interest of this service can hardly be exaggerated; and it is an essential part of our colonial responsibility. The sooner and the better the service is given, the more rapidly African education will gather its own momentum and produce Africans fit to undertake work for which at present Europeans are required.

Financially the teaching profession is no more attractive in East Africa than elsewhere, and probably cannot be: but much could be done in other ways to attract teachers and make them proud of their profession. A great responsibility lies with European heads of schools to help their African recruits to a good professional standard of work, and to treat them as colleagues rather than as grown-up schoolboys. But the sense of vocation and enthusiasm for teaching can first be stimulated in the training centres, and I think that these (for primary as distinct from vernacular teachers) should be large public establishments rather than Mission preserves; for only so can the in-breeding and "hot-house" atmosphere of small grouping be avoided, and a sense of co-operation and solidarity fostered among teachers.

(4) *Unity in Diversity.* I have commented upon the great variety of the East African picture: it is a variety of distinct patches, not of blended shades. The social problem everywhere is to break down a narrow parochialism and to create wider understanding and co-operation; and education is an obvious field for this effort. An African belongs to a compact family group, within which he accepts binding duty of loyalty and assistance; but outside it his sense of neighbourly duty is commonly very weak. As the ties of kinship are loosened under the stress of a new economy, there is no sort of guarantee that a man's loyalty will gain in breadth what it loses in intensity. Similarly the strength of tribal sentiment is divisive, and no tribe is large enough to be a self-supporting economic or political unit. It may be suggested that the colonial territory or region, or even the British Colonial Empire, may become the objects of a wider loyalty for Africans and educate them to a larger sense of community. But I do not think they can, for they are not natural units with any clear appeal to personal sentiment or interest. For the most potent stimulus to a wider social sense would be acceptance of the Christian Gospel, with its sublime but simple teaching of neighbourly duty; but even here division—at some time, bitter division—is apparent among those who seek to spread the Gospel. More than one young African has said to me, "The Christian Missions have divided my people".

The complex of deep causes which have divided Western Christianity is of close concern and interest to many besides theologians and historians, and there is no short road to its solution; but while there is so little active co-operation between diverse Christian agencies, the division remains an obstacle and an offence to Africans. Education has very much to gain from diversity: any uniform system of schools would impoverish development, and no one who has visited the best schools of different type in East Africa—whether Roman Catholic, Protestant, Anglo-Catholic or undenominational Government school—could wish



that all should be assimilated to one model. But it is most urgently necessary that all should work actively together in their common task of education, and that the men and women who direct and teach in them should meet often and freely and consult together, not only on official committees. They have much to learn from one another, and the closer contact between the schools and teachers of different type might teach young Africans, better than anything else could teach it, the social lesson they most need to learn, that men may have different traditions and own different allegiance, and yet work together cordially in a common cause.

If this lesson of active friendship is not learnt early (and we ourselves must first learn and teach it), there is real danger that the object of our trusteeship may be missed; that common fears and suspicions may grow strong and achieve in wasteful conflict the African co-operation which education has failed to teach.

(Footnote.—In Uganda nearly all schools and teacher-training centres are Mission institutions; but certain secondary schools and primary teacher-training centres are now "self-governing," with full financial support from public funds. In Kenya the Government has a few primary schools and one teacher-training centre, and it is now planning to extend its control in primary and secondary education and in teacher-training. In Tanganyika there is a more comprehensive scheme of public establishments, hitherto restricted by lack of staff and financial support. In Zanzibar, where Islam is predominant the schools racially mixed, and the Government establishment much larger in proportion to the population, the position is peculiar and hardly comparable with that of the mainland territories.)

### A BAPTISM IN CEYLON

On my recent tour, I conducted another service of Adult Baptism by immersion, when no less than 32 were baptized. It is certainly one of the most impressive and picturesque occasions in missionary activity here just now. I sit in a boat with my attendants, pushed a little way out from the shore. The Neophytes are brought to me, one at a time, and in the slow moving waters of the freshwater lagoon they are baptized one by one by immersion. After reaching the shore once more, they are clad in white robes and await my return to the shore, when we go in procession to the church some few yards away, singing a hymn. I then stand at the door of the church and sign each one of them with the Sign of the Cross and continue the Adult Baptismal Service from our Prayer Book standing at the font in church. There, then, follows the Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist, at which they receive Holy Communion for the first time. This had entailed constant preparation for over six months and more, sometimes up to a year, in the case of each person after they had been admitted as Catechumens. Those of you who are interested in the liturgies of the early primitive Church will find how strikingly this compares with the account given by Hippolytus in his *Apostolic Constitution*, and from a description given of the practice of the Church at Jerusalem in the writings of St. Cyril (Bishop of Jerusalem A.D. 347) and those of St. Ambrose and St. Augustine.

*From the circular letter No. 16 from the Bishop of Colombo.*

# MASS EDUCATION

By ROBERT R. YOUNG\*

**M**ANY missionaries seem to be afraid of mass education. Their fear of it is quite understandable, though this does not mean that it is justified. The Christian knows that education of itself does not necessarily make for human well-being. He realizes that knowledge, whether it be little knowledge or much, is always a dangerous thing, unless it is accompanied by a properly developed sense of responsibility, and the development of a sense of responsibility is one of the most difficult of educational processes. The most important educational aims are always concerned with personal values and relationships rather than with mere techniques and skills.

The term "mass education" may by association suggest quantity rather than quality. It may suggest something superficial, the multiplication of the already large number of semi-literate, half-educated discontented people who are not so much "men of two worlds" as men adrift between two worlds, and at home in neither the one nor the other. Perhaps "mass education" suggests by association the idea of mass production, and the mass produced article, useful as it may be, normally lacks the finer qualities of the thing on which has been lavished the care of personal interest. If "mass education" suggests some of the ideas associated with the utility product, or the application of modern machinery to the production of large scale results of doubtful value merely on the score of expediency, the hesitation of some people to welcome it with whole-hearted enthusiasm is understandable.

The report of the Colonial Office Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies, called "Mass Education in African Society" (Colonial No. 186) was published in 1943. The title may have given rise to some misconceptions, but a careful reading of the report itself ought to dispel most of these erroneous impressions. Mass education is not a name for an inferior sort of education, and though the term is not clearly defined in the report itself, the meaning is quite definitely suggested in its first four paragraphs. "The school," we read, "is not enough, though it is the central point of advance. The co-operation of the adult is essential. It follows that the education of the adult is not less important though in the early days of educational development it may not seem so urgent." The Report speaks of the danger of partial development and suggests the need for the training of the community as a whole, or the education of the mass of the community. A distinction is made, of course, between school education for children, and education in a much broader sense which can apply to both young and old. School education for children is only a part of that training of the whole community which is implied in the title "Mass Education". This includes "schemes of education covering the whole

\* The Rev. R. R. Young is a C.M.S. missionary formerly working in West Africa, and now Principal of Liskeard Lodge, Blackheath.



community and designed to enable them both to maintain their own cohesion under the stress of powerful influences and to reap for themselves the advantages which the changing conditions of life may offer ”.

It would therefore be a mistake to regard mass education as merely the provision of schools for all children of school age, though this must naturally be one of its objectives. But it is an objective that is unlikely to be reached within a reasonable period if it becomes the sole target. Universal schooling would be quite impracticable without considerable changes in the social habits of the people, and in the prevailing economic conditions of the territories concerned: these changes can only come about through development which includes the education of the mass of the people in a wider sense. Development plans remain merely paper plans unless the men can be found and trained to carry them out, and the ignorance of the masses, not infrequently exploited by the few, is one of the greatest barriers to democratic progress. Adult education is certainly an essential part of development in the political, the economic, or the religious sphere, but mass education includes also the education of the young. The extension of educational facilities for children must be seen in its true perspective as a necessary part of the education of the whole community, and this must be pushed forward as rapidly as growing resources permit. It should also be recognized that organized child education in the form in which we know it requires fairly elaborate apparatus in the shape of special buildings and equipment. The extension of child education does not necessarily mean only the multiplication of schools in the generally accepted sense of the term. Wherever there is a group of people, whether adults or children, who wish to learn something, and a friend who is willing to teach, there is a school, and such schools can find or make their own apparatus and can meet almost anywhere. While recognizing the necessity of universal schooling for children as soon as may be, we should not forget the value of those simpler forms of voluntary educational association with which we are familiar in the churches, the Bible class and Sunday school, the discussion group, the social gathering for a special purpose, and the small exhibition of local interest. The Sunday School and the night class played no small part in the development of mass education in England. It may well be the case in Africa.

Mass education as envisaged in the Report is not something entirely new. It is first of all the re-alignment of existing and well-tried educational processes according to a perfectly sound strategic conception. From the point of view of community welfare progress must have a certain measure of balance. Neither an unbalanced vehicle nor an unbalanced community can travel far without danger of disaster. If there is one-sided development stresses and strains are set up in the community which may seriously hinder progress and may even cause disintegration. Concentration on child education alone, especially when the education given to the children is foreign in character, sets up considerable tension between educated children and uneducated parents. If parents can even in a small measure share in the new

knowledge and especially in the new outlook of their children, that tension is lessened.

The fact that so few girls are educated in comparison to the number of boys who receive schooling is due mainly to the attitude of parents and to the place allotted to women in tribal life and thought. Where, as in Christian communities generally, the parents have been influenced by the Christian idea of womanhood and are in some degree enlightened and educated, many more girls are sent to school. Child education is facilitated as parents themselves become enlightened, through Christian influences for example, even though they may not have had schooling. So long as the younger people have the knowledge but lack the power, and the older people have authority but lack knowledge there is bound to be conflict and frustration. If the education of the younger generation is to bear fruit attention must be given not only to the provision of more schools for children, but also to the education of their parents through whatever means may be found practicable and appropriate.

We may say that mass education certainly includes in its full development universal schooling for children, but this can only be accomplished if the older people themselves, through some measure of education in a broad sense, come to see the value and purpose of the education of their children for life in the new world, and are prepared to co-operate in making it possible. In the long run, whether education is organized by the government or not, it is the people themselves who must pay for it, and they will pay willingly only for what they want.

The Mass Education Report makes no departure in principle from what has long been implicit in the educational policy of the Colonial Office. The term "Community Education" has stood for a concept which has long been accepted as the goal of educational effort, the advancement of the whole people. The education of the community as a whole can mean nothing less than the education of the masses, as distinct from the education of the privileged few. This does not mean that all must be educated in the same way or to the same level, which would be manifestly impossible, but that there must be certain basic training, information, and guidance made available for all. What is new in the report is its emphasis on the urgency of the task (a task which has in fact already been begun) in face of the new social and economic pressures which the African peoples as a whole are yet ill-equipped to meet, and the suggestion of new techniques and new organization by which the task of community education may be attempted with some hope of success.

To think of mass education merely in terms of organized schooling is to have too narrow a concept of its range and its methods. There are, of course, many educational agencies at work in the community as a whole in addition to the education departments specially charged with the task of education. Agricultural departments through their demonstrators teach new techniques and introduce new ideas. Health departments work for the improvement of sanitation and through their clinics and dispensaries influence the public attitude to child welfare and in some measure to the whole question of the cause and cure



and prevention of disease. The work of District Officers and the development and organization of local government on improved lines is practical education in citizenship. Public relations officers disseminate information and ideas and do much to interpret to the people generally the various measures taken by government for their welfare. All this is community education or mass education, for its aim is at least, even if it does not always succeed, to influence the whole life of the community. But such education is not generally adequately co-ordinated, nor is there usually in any territory one over-all plan or agreed objective that is at all sharply defined or generally understood.

A chief in a small town in West Africa had been visited by the sanitary inspector and the Agricultural demonstrator. "What am I to do?" he said to the missionary. "The sanitary inspector says I must scrape the grass in my town as it encourages mosquitoes. The agricultural demonstrator says I must let it grow as it prevents soil erosion. What am I to do?" It is obvious that if it is to be effective the work of these itinerant teachers sent out under various authorities needs to be carefully co-ordinated, and also the basic concepts which lie behind much that they teach must be generally understood if their teaching is to have the desired results. What is needed is the close co-operation of the various existing educational agencies working towards definite objectives in a given area. In any such plans the relationship between the question of sanitary measures and the prevention of soil erosion would be understood by all who would be co-operating in the work of education, so confusion would be avoided. "Mass education," says the report, "should . . . call out the ability and the will to share in the direction and control of the social, economic, and political forces at work in the community." This is a matter of vital concern to the Christian.

It is interesting to compare the suggested curriculum of mass education with some of the educational objectives set forth for the church in the report of the Tambaram Conference of 1928, entitled "The World Mission of the Church."

To quote the Mass education report, "The curriculum covers not only improvement in health and agriculture and rural economics but the building up of strong units of local government, sound family and social life, and those recreational and leisure time activities without which no people can long survive."

The Tambaram report, while always giving first place to man's spiritual needs, makes no sharp distinction between sacred and secular studies. Christian education, it says, claims the whole man and his whole life for God.

"If education is a function of the community, . . . then Christian education . . . will be a system in which the local church seeks, with the help which the older churches give, to share its life with its own members and with their neighbours. The schools which it establishes will be kept in closest touch with the life of the home, the community and the nation."\* A footnote explains that "community" here does not mean the Christian community alone, but rather the people of a neighbourhood, region or country.

\* *World Mission of the Church*, p. 87.

In considering the life of the church in the changing social order it is suggested that the church must be interested in "increasing the fruitfulness of the land, raising the level of literacy and intelligence, providing wholesome recreation, turning slums into homes, rescuing people from financial exploitation or trying to prevent such sin, directing the energies and the social instincts of youth into channels of wholesomeness and service. All these are the blessed touch of the hand of Christ when done by men and women filled with the love of Christ and equipped with special knowledge and skill for the task."

"Change individuals," it says, "and you do not necessarily change the social order unless you organise those changed individuals into collective action in a wide scale frontal attack upon those corporate evils."\*

A comparison will show that the objectives of mass education are very similar to those of the church at least on the material side, and also to a large extent on the social and human side.

Mass education may be described as a wide scale frontal attack upon the evils of ignorance and of habits of life that are harmful to the community as a whole. It can to-day bring to its task new resources that are still rapidly developing and new techniques that have already proved their value and in view of which the achievements of the past are no criterion of what may be possible to-day.

In the mass education movement the church will have an important influence as well as a considerable share in the work. It is itself a group within the larger community, a community within a community. It has in the community at large a unique position, because it is a part that is in a special way concerned with the welfare of the people as a whole. It is, when it is true to itself, actively seeking to reach and influence as many lives as possible. It is seeking to influence the whole community with a message that when its implications are seen must affect the whole of life in all its relationships both personal and material. Christian teaching on stewardship will influence—and in fact has influenced—farming practice and economic organization. Christian teaching on the family affects the home and all that relates to it and alters the social organization of a people. The church is all the time in fact engaged in community education, in teaching, whether direct or incidental, that is concerned with the life of people in the community and the uses they make of the material things around them. A great deal has been done by the church for the improvement of health, in the introduction of better sanitation and better houses, in teaching the use of new tools, and in the improvement of agricultural practice. It has also trained its own members in responsibility, self government and community service.

But because the church is only a part of the whole community it can be only one of the agencies engaged in the total task of mass education. Only an agency which stands in a common relationship with all sections can carry out an educational programme that touches the whole field. The government itself is the only agency which stands in this common relationship to every section and every member of the

\* *World Mission of the Church*, p. 127



community as a whole. It must therefore be the function of government to draw into co-operation these diverse elements of which the whole community is composed and to encourage their participation in the common task.

The Mass education report suggests that the church is one group whose co-operation will, along with that of other groups, be sought and welcomed in the planning and carrying out of mass education programmes. The organization for Mass education is to consist of teams or groups in the various communities made up of official and non-official members of voluntary groups who are brought into consultation and asked to co-operate.

The diagram in the annexure, Appendix III, suggests that the District Commissioner and the Mass Education officer will with these officials and co-operating groups in consultation decide the particular project and target for their community in view of the general situation and needs and the resources available. Such an organization will bring the church into touch with expert advice on technical matters connected with the mass education work she is already doing, and also will enable her to contribute to the larger task her own insights and experience as she brings her own work into relation with the work of the team. She may in fact herself supply some of the experts.

In Mass education it is often found advisable to concentrate on a limited objective instead of trying to teach a great many things at the same time. For example, health education for a certain definite period may be centred round the one theme of village sanitation. This will be taught by every available means, through the film and other visual aids both in the villages and in the schools, through literature, by demonstration and through voluntary service of social workers who may help in the digging of latrines and in the making of compost heaps or pits for the disposal of refuse. The teaching will be reinforced by the agricultural demonstrators from their particular angle, and in its own Christian community the church in that area will at that particular time stress the same theme for its own people, as well as call out their help in teaching others. The same theme will also be used as the basis for lessons in the schools. Christians will of course look at this question from their own angle. They will see good sanitation not only as a public duty and safeguard, but in its religious and moral aspects, and this will strengthen the effectiveness of their work. At the same time by gearing in to the general project and co-operating with the team of experts they will have available for their own teaching all the special apparatus and techniques that are in use during the campaign as a whole. It is in fact probable that in such a case the Christians would reap more benefit than most, because they are often already the most progressive members of the community, and the result would again illustrate the paradoxical truth stated by Our Lord, "to him that hath shall be given".

For the church the development of mass education should help to provide greater facilities for much of the work she is already doing.

In relation to the question of co-operation with other agencies in mass education and especially with regard to the concern of the church with many of the objectives of mass education, the Tambaram reports

have a good deal to say that is helpful. They deal with such questions as the importance of literacy and literature, the economic life of the church and the ministry of healing. In rural areas "The comprehensive programme includes: better agriculture, better health, better recreation, better homes, better economic organization, the widening of intellectual horizons, the enrichment of rural life through music, drama and other forms of the arts, the development of community spirit, as well as the vitally important work of Christian preaching and teaching, and guidance in worship, fellowship and service."\*

If these are objectives to be striven for in the Christian community mass education provides plenty of scope for Christian service on the part of members of the churches without throwing upon the churches themselves the whole burden of organization and equipment. As one reads the programme set out here at Tambaram it seems that many of the ideas suggested in the Mass Education report have been anticipated.

The rapid development of school education for children that must come as a part of mass education will undoubtedly create a new situation for the church. It should not be too readily assumed that it will be a less favourable situation. Before the farm is made in West Africa the bush must be cleared. Then is the farm ploughed and the seed sown. The old paganism with its tangled growths may well be cleared away by the cutting edge of modern education, but that will only lay bare the soil for the seed of a new life. The opportunity will be there, but it must be seized before the weeds grow up. One effect of education is to make people more educable. It opens the mind to new influences and sets us free from old habits and prejudices. The tribesman who has never come under the influence of the school is, we know, deeply conservative, and it is in fact not at all easy to find an entry into his mind for the message of the gospel. That message does reach him; and he grasps its essential meaning intuitively, yet often he still walks somewhat gropingly and unsteadily in the light. It is from those whose minds have been at least in some degree opened by the direct or indirect influence of education that the most intelligent response is obtained. We may have to think out new ways of approach, we may have to use different kinds of analogy in our preaching, we may have to work out new types of organization, but among the newly educated the church will have immense new opportunities.

Perhaps one of the greatest needs to-day is to train evangelists who are in touch with the new currents of thought and can speak the language of those who are coming out of the tribal system into the bewildering modern world. The new evangelist needs not only to study tribal beliefs, he needs to study even more carefully the primary school curriculum, and to familiarize himself with the basic assumptions that lie behind the majority of the text books used in the schools. It is that background to which his message must now be related. But if we are at all aware of the immense spiritual hunger that will be aroused through the spread of education which may not itself be concerned or equipped to satisfy that hunger, we shall realize the greatness of our opportunity.

\* *World Mission of the Church*, p. 175.



The gospel can only be understood when it is preached in the context of contemporary life. Where it is so preached it can mould the development of that life and give it direction, but it must be preached not by those who stand aside and watch, but by those who are at the heart of the struggle. We may see in mass education a danger of the further growth of that materialistic outlook that is spreading in Africa through the impact of western civilization, but that is a danger not to be feared but to be faced. "If Christianity is true," said the late Dr. Temple, "the spiritual and the material are not in themselves naturally hostile though they easily enough become so; they are mutually supplementary. The spiritual is only active, perhaps only actual (if these are to be distinguished) so far as it possesses and expresses itself through the material."\*\*

It is only by active participation in the mass education movement that Christians can influence the character of that movement as it develops, and on its development may depend to a large extent the nature of the new society that is being shaped in Africa to-day. Those anxious to co-operate may yet see very great difficulties in the way. Missionaries are already over-worked, churches are under-staffed, there are already too many organizations, and above all there is the growing consciousness that we are being too easily diverted from our primary task which is to preach the gospel. Where are we to find the time for spiritual work? Here again we may remind ourselves of the words of Dr. Temple: "The spiritual and the material are not in themselves naturally hostile". So often it is the material that provides the opportunities for personal contact. We have to build bridges over which the gospel can travel. It is the relationship that comes through the act of service of co-operation that forms the bridge. The farmer may not be interested in listening to the preaching of the pastor who sends to call him to a service, but he will listen to his friend who helps him in a practical way.

Mass education need not be looked upon as a new and impossible burden on the shoulders of missionaries and church leaders. It is rather an opportunity for calling out the service of many thousands of ordinary Christian people who have never known perhaps how much was theirs to give, for the bulk of the work of mass education will not be done by experts, but by multitudes of very ordinary people passing on to others quite simple things they have learned themselves.

Where the church co-operates in a mass education project as a Christian group and in the spirit of Christian service, it will not only help the community and contribute to mass education, but it will also enrich its own Christian life and experience.

When there is something happening in which all are interested, corporate prayer takes on a new significance. We all know how dull the prayer meeting can be when people come together each out of his own world of private interests and an attempt is made to suggest some subject in which perhaps all ought to be interested, but of which most have little practical knowledge. But when something happens

\*\* *Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship*, by William Temple. (Longmans Green & Co, 1926), p. 17.

in the community, something which affects everyone and in which all have a personal concern, prayers are real and spontaneous.

A mass education project (such as perhaps a teaching and demonstration campaign concerned with a better water supply) can become a matter of interest and concern to the church. The church representatives on the team will have discussed with others the particular needs of the locality and the general kind of teaching to be given. There will no doubt in some cases be films shown, there will possibly be broadcast talks by various people, and there will be posters and models and diagrams showing the importance of clean water, types of wells to be dug, methods of irrigation and drainage, and so on. There will also be articles in the local vernacular papers, and perhaps small books or pamphlets which are linked with the subject matter of the films or lantern talks and may introduce some of the same illustrative material.

How this all links up with the message the church has to teach! One has only to think of the significance of water in the Scriptures to realize what a wonderful spiritual opportunity such a campaign could be in the church. How often has an event of the greatest spiritual significance taken place beside a well. How often did our Lord use the material as an illustration of the spiritual. Water is not only a chemical compound; it is also a symbol and a sacrament. With what freshness and vividness would those passages of scripture concerning "pure water", "living water", "the water of life", "rivers of water", "springs of water", with all their wealth of meaning, come home to the minds of people whose thoughts had been centred on the vital matter of the provision of health-giving water for their own villages. Much of the force of sound words depends on the occasion on which they are spoken. When these people are brought to see the practical meaning of carrying out Our Lord's own commands about water their prayers will take on a new reality. It is not so easy in an African village to give a neighbour a cup of cold water that is safe and clean, and to be able to so do in the name of Christ may mean much hard work and sacrifice, the clearing of bush, the digging of wells, the draining of swamps.

But as people learn to work together in the name of Christ, so will they learn the better to pray together and their faith will be deepened as their lives are enriched by this fellowship of service. In such an undertaking the local church also becomes more truly indigenous, for it is sharing in a community effort and feels itself to be a part of the people as a whole as it seeks to serve the whole community. For the church the important thing is that the spiritual should become active by expressing itself through the material. The work must be linked with the worship. Where this happens the welfare or mass education project will not result in secularization, but rather it will bring more life to the church itself, as it will also help the church to give more abundant life to others.



# A CHRISTIAN MEDICAL SCHOOL

By NORMAN S. MACPHERSON\*

**I**F anyone were ignorant of or needed reminding of the fact that India is even now a country very largely unreached by the benefits of modern medical science and services, the recently published "Bhore Report" would prove a somewhat startling eye-opener: indeed, to many who have been living and working in India for years, the facts and figures it presents must be a surprise and disappointment. The Bhore Report is that of a committee appointed by the government of India in 1943 to conduct a survey of health services throughout British India (i.e. India excluding the Native States) and to make recommendations for their post-war development. An illuminating contrast is made between conditions in Britain and India, and the following are a few of the facts revealed. In Britain the "expectation of life" at birth is a little over 62 years, in India it is something more than 26 years: this short expectation of life in India is largely due to the great child mortality which is about five times as great as that in Britain. The ratio of doctors and nurses to population in Britain is approximately 1 to 1,000 and 1 to 300 respectively; for India the corresponding figures are 1 to 6,000 and 1 to 43,000, and most of these doctors and nurses are working in the cities and larger towns leaving the villages largely untouched. Hospital beds number more than 7 for every 1,000 of the population in Britain; in India there is less than 1 bed for every 4,000 of the population. These figures will serve to show how tragically under-supplied the country is with the medical services which are now-a-days so freely available in western countries, and it does not need much imagination to picture something of the unrelieved suffering that exists throughout the land: the committee itself expresses its views on this huge volume of disease and avoidable ill-health in these words: "If it were possible to evaluate the loss which this country annually suffers through the avoidable waste of valuable human material and the lowering of human efficiency through malnutrition and preventable inability, we feel the result would be so startling that the whole country would be roused and would not rest until a radical change had been brought about."

The problem is not, however, merely that of the care of the sick and injured; it is complicated by the immense amount of ill-health among those not obviously ill or in need of treatment. The Journal of the Christian Medical Association of India recently published a report of a survey of health conditions in a group of families in Travancore state, all the members of which would have been regarded as in a normal state of health: it was found that every individual showed signs of malnutrition or deficiency disease, all were suffering from infection with one or more kinds of intestinal parasite, and in not one

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family was the diet anything but grossly inadequate in quality to maintain health. This investigation was made on a small scale only, but it is probable that similar results would be found in the majority of the population not only of Travancore but of the whole of India.

These are days when medical missions are faced with many and serious problems chief of which are those of inadequate resources in personnel and money to maintain, let alone expand, present work. Curative medicine, such as that provided in an ordinary hospital, is a considerably more complicated and more expensive undertaking than it was some years ago, and it would be a hard task to bring all mission hospitals up to the standard of efficiency that is required if they are to be worthy Christian institutions. Is there an alternative to constant striving after a seemingly impossible end? The minds of many who are responsible for the direction of medical mission policy have of recent years been turning more and more to the field of preventive medicine as one in which Christian enterprise can make a great and perhaps its most valuable contribution.

In connection with the health survey referred to above, the Medical Board of the Diocese of Travancore and Cochin has made an appeal for help in the work of building a healthier community and is looking for "someone with medical training or a fully trained health nurse who would have a vision of the nature of the work God is calling us to do, and who would be prepared to lead and build up Rural Health Work in our Diocese."

The type of work envisaged may be less attractive in many ways than that of a well-equipped hospital but in the long run will it not prove to be far more constructive and worthwhile, for prevention *is* better than cure, and it is surely better to enable people to grow up and keep healthy rather than to watch them get sick and then cure them or patch them up, often indeed only to fall ill again? Propaganda may well prove more potent than pills and the septic tank than the scapel!

In apparently strange and violent contrast to the call for men and women to engage in rural and preventive work there is in South India a Christian medical institution which is growing even larger and more complex and absorbing increasingly large numbers of staff and increasingly large sums of money: that institution is the Christian Medical College, Vellore. Is this a case of inconsistency or is there a close and fundamental connection between these two types of work? The answer should be clear, namely that the two are complementary the one to the other, and that it is to such a college that the rural areas must look for their workers, while the college seeks to supply the need by placing due emphasis on the importance of preventive medicine and by keeping before its students the idea and the vision of such service as a great Christian vocation.

It was in 1918 that, eighteen years after beginning medical mission work in Vellore, Dr. Ida Scudder embarked on the task of training Indian women doctors and, from that time on, the medical school that she founded has grown in size and importance and has been the means of sending out hundreds of Christian doctors into different spheres of work in many parts of India. Of recent years the standards



of medical education have been, and are still being, considerably raised in India and, in order to comply with government requirements in these matters, the Vellore Medical School had to undertake the not small task of equipping itself for university grade teaching and becoming an affiliated college of the University of Madras. That this was a very large undertaking was recognized from the first, but of its full magnitude no one had, mercifully, a real conception: it would seem that God allowed those responsible for guiding this enterprise to see just enough of its size and difficulty to serve as a challenge and stimulus to faith and courage, but not enough to cause them to feel that it was too big and costly to embark on. It was naturally a cause for great thankfulness when in 1945 provisional recognition of the Christian Medical College was granted by the University of Madras, enabling it to give its students the whole course of instruction for the M.B.B.S. degree of that university: it is hoped that this recognition will be confirmed and made final within the next few months.

Thus far training has been given to women students only, but Vellore is intended for men students also, and a first small group of 10 is to be admitted in July of this year. An annual entry of 25 men and 25 women is planned for so that eventually there will be a student body numbering up to 300, as the course extends over five and a half years. There is immediate need for a hostel to house the men students and for additional classrooms and laboratory accommodation to provide for the increased numbers of under-graduates.

Were these the only new buildings required the problem would be comparatively simple: other parts of the institution, however, also demand development and expansion chief of these being the nursing training school and the hospital. Concurrently with the advance in medical education there has been progress in the field of nursing training, and in 1946 Vellore undertook, at the request of the University of Madras, to open a class for nurses which should lead up to the B.Sc. degree (in nursing) of the university: this naturally involved considerable increases in teaching staff and accommodation and in living quarters for nursing students. As regards the hospital, there has already been great expansion; bed numbers have been raised to the present total of 414, but in order to provide all that are needed both for the teaching of students and for a comprehensive medical and surgical service for patients, a further increase up to 600 is required within two years. Unfortunately all this has to be done in these very difficult years, and it is regrettable and disappointing that building conditions are more trying and costs higher than they were even during the war years. The task is, however, being persevered with and the experience of God's provision and guiding in the past is a great encouragement and incentive for all that yet remains to be done.

That the need for this college is great and that the employment of large numbers of staff and large sums of money is fully justified is shown both by the considered opinion of the Christian Medical Association of India and by the support of the 40 missionary societies and other Christian organizations in six or more countries which contribute to its maintenance (including the C.M.S. and the S.P.G.). The Association

recently expressed its views thus : " We state emphatically that we regard Christian Higher Medical Education as the most urgent and important project for medical missions in India—so important that, if it cannot be attained otherwise, some of the medical work in India should be sacrificed even though the loss would be great." The real " union " character of the institution is shown by the large numbers of its supporting bodies, and it is a cause for much thankfulness that there exists in it a great experience of unity in Christ testified to by members of the staff as something of reality and deep value. At this time when the South India Church Union scheme has been agreed to and if shortly to be put into operation, this experience at Vellore may well serve as a source of encouragement to believe the larger union will prove to be very real, rich and vital.

The main objective of the Christian Medical College at Vellore and the task which, at the present time, it alone can perform in India is to provide the university grade of training of Christian doctors : its purpose is not merely that of providing Christian young men and women with the opportunity to enter the medical profession, important as this is, but it seeks to produce doctors who shall be good professionally and who shall also be *real* Christians, and evangelists as well as physicians and surgeons. There is a tendency to assume, in a way that would never be done in Britain, that students who enter as " Christians " are, all converted, convinced followers of Jesus Christ : this is, of course, not the case, and the aims of the college are first to select the students who are most likely, on the grounds of character, upbringing and Christian " foundations ", to prove satisfactory material, and then to help them in every way possible, during their five and a half years in the institution, to become strong, established Christians, at the same time providing them with a professional education second to none in India, as indeed, in any other country.

A systematic course of Christian teaching is therefore an important part of the college programme. This course, planned to cover a period of five years, is now being worked out and is designed to include Bible study, the fundamentals of the Christian faith, the Christian attitude towards the problems of disease, suffering and healing and the practical questions of prayer, worship and evangelism. One hour a week is set aside under the leadership of a member of the staff for this study and instruction, and it is not hard to realize the valuable opportunity that this period affords, and also what a supremely important task is that of those who work out this teaching scheme and conduct the leaders' preparation groups. It is, however, essential that all the life and activities of the college should be permeated by the Spirit of Christ—the Sunday services and daily prayers in the chapel, the care of the patients in the hospital, the everyday relations between staff and students and between members of the staff themselves, and indeed the whole conduct of the affairs of the institution. If the opportunity is great, the responsibility is correspondingly great, and there is need of the best that the Church can contribute to this undertaking of preparing Indian young men and women to be leaders and true missionaries in the Church as well as in the medical profession. Part of this contribution must for some years



to come be in the form of foreign missionary staff for the various departments of both College and hospital as there are not yet available nearly sufficient Indian candidates for all the senior staff posts.

It is a source of great thankfulness that there is much very promising material in the student community and that there are many signs of spiritual life and keenness among them: evidence of this is to be found in the large membership of the Student Christian Movement, in the undertaking of Sunday school work and in the real interest and responsiveness on the part of the students that many leaders of the weekly Bible classes have experienced. With gratitude to God for this is combined a deep desire that this movement of the Holy Spirit may grow stronger and deeper and that no member of the staff may fail in his or her responsible task of rightly influencing and guiding this potential power for the Kingdom of God.

The same programme of Christian teaching is carried out among the nursing students as among the medical students with, of course, the same aim and object; special emphasis has, however, been laid in this description on the work among the medical students, not because it is more important than that among nurses and other workers but because there are, one is glad to say, many good Christian training schools for nurses and many good Christian hospitals, whereas Vellore is one of only three Christian medical schools in India (the others being Ludhiana and Miraj) and, alone among them, has had the opportunity and privilege of becoming a university grade college, with all the extra scope and responsibility that this brings with it.

As part of every centre of medical education there must necessarily be a thoroughly well-equipped hospital and, thanks to the great development of the mission hospital in Vellore during the past few years, the Christian Medical College has a hospital adequate for its present requirements, but much remains to be done to bring it up to the standard of efficiency already referred to as its final objective. However, even when this has been achieved, there will remain almost limitless fields for expansion and progress. It is the definite intention of the Christian Medical College to devote particular attention to three special lines of work and research, namely Leprosy, Mental and Psychological Diseases and Rural and Preventive Medicine. Of the need in these fields much could be written—here it must suffice to emphasize that in spite of a that has already been done in the treatment of Leprosy in India only a fraction of the problem has as yet been dealt with, and curative and preventive treatment, research and Christian care are all most urgently needed. The position with regard to Psychiatry in India is that this is an almost untouched realm of medicine, and a wonderful opportunity lies in front of those who will pioneer in this field not only as physicians but as Christians, seeking to make available the healing power of Christ to some of the millions in need of such help. Of the need for Preventive Medicine in the villages of India enough has been said earlier in this article to show how pressing it is, and what a wonderful avenue for Christian service it offers.

For one more particular kind of study the Vellore college needs, as a Christian medical institution, to prepare itself, namely the special

healing ministry of the Church of Christ, about which most Christians are as yet very ignorant. Much is known of physical and mental agencies in healing, but what of the directly spiritual agencies—powers waiting to be made available and to be used? Surely here, too, God has great things He wants to make known to His people, and should not Vellore desire and expect to be given the honour and privilege of being His agent in this sphere?

India is much in the public eye these days, and no one who cares anything for that great country can be anything but deeply concerned for her future. Apart from the awful possibilities in the major political field, many people are asking what the future holds in store for the Christian Church in India, and much has already been written on this subject. That there may be difficult days ahead for Christian work there has already been evidence, and undoubtedly all engaged in it, Indian and foreign, will need much grace, courage, strength and wisdom, and the help and backing of the prayer of fellow-Christians the world over. That the Christian Medical College at Vellore may make a worthy contribution to the Church and the people of India is the earnest desire of all connected with it, and that through it God, Who has led and provided in this undertaking so wonderfully hitherto, may be able to work out His purposes in the years to come.

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### THE TASK OF THE INDIAN CHURCH

The following extract from a letter received from an Indian friend by Canon M. A. C. Warren, General Secretary of the C.M.S., and quoted by him at the C.M.S. Anniversary meeting, provides a striking commentary on present conditions, and on the kind of help for which the Church in India will continue to look in the future:

“You say in your letter that you ‘would very much like to have my views as to the future prospects’ in India. If Hinduism and Islam ever come to anything like cordial relations it will be only when they meet and are one in Christ. The Indian Church is weak and hardly able to stand on its legs when the Britishers quit, but who knows that they will not meet the challenge of the future once they are face to face with it. Surely it must be within God’s providence to use the Indian Church for the uplift of India, or the whole enterprise of Christian Missions must have been in vain. The future of India is bound up with the Indian Church, and if the Church proves true to the salt it has eaten and takes up the challenge in right earnest, God will provide the necessary strength and the means for the great task.

“The question we are asking to-day is: ‘Will England keep the banner of the Cross flying in India and other non-Christian countries?’ She was foremost when the enterprise started, and I hope it will not be said of her that she lagged behind when her earthly power in India grew less and came almost to an end.”



# SEEKING SOULS

By MARY LECKIE\*

**I**S the world just as full of them as ever, even in this materialistic, irreligious age? It is impossible to say for certain, but it can be safely said that any rate in South India there are enough of them to keep many more of God's servants, Indian and Western, employed in contacting them and then, like St. Paul, building up believers in their faith. They are to be found, too, among all classes, high and low, rich and poor, high caste as well as outcaste, Muslim, Parsee, Sikh, as well as Hindu, among the least likely types of people to be attracted to our Faith as well as among the poor and despised in Mass Movement areas, who usually move in groups rather than as individuals. We read and hear of deputations of villagers coming to missionaries and begging for teachers, and of their too often having to be sent away disappointed because there are no teachers to send them and no money for their support. The great majority of Christians, Eastern and Western, seem indifferent to their poignant appeals, content to let them wait for years, disappointed, unsaved, untaught, uncheered by the Gospel message, till, maybe, they die or lose their desire or become absorbed into some non-Christian movement.

If this audible and pathetic call of many seekers after God too often falls on deaf ears, how shall the inaudible heart cry of seekers buried in reef-like stratas of society, like nuggets of gold in the rock, be sensed and adequately responded to? Yet to those of God's servants who can truly say: "Mine ear hast Thou opened," adding, "Teach me to do Thy will, O my God," He does lead such seekers in a very unmistakable way, or guides His fellow-labourers to them, thus impressing upon them the truth of His promise "In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths," and bringing home to them the tragedy of the incalculable number of lost opportunities for soul-winning among similar seekers in the many towns and districts where there are no earnest servants of God within reach to whom they can go.

My purpose here is to tell of some belonging to the higher stratas of society who are seekers after God, though most of them are not now, at any rate, under any direct Christian influence, and among those personally known to me the greater number happen to be from the very caste generally considered the most unresponsive, the Brahmins.

Such a one is a middle-aged doctor who asked for a talk almost the first time he met the writer, and instead of having questions to ask to "clear his doubts," as is fairly common with thoughtful Hindus, who know something or much of Christianity, he wished to be given a kind of résumé of the Christian Faith and an explanation of the connection between the Testaments. He bought a New Testament in English and later on another copy for his son, a college student, and he and his family

\* The writer of this article has been an honorary missionary of C.E.Z.M.S. in India for twenty-seven years.

appear to some extent to resemble Cornelius and his household, though they have not yet progressed as far along the road in their search after God.

Yet another elderly Brahmin gentleman, with a background of Christian education, wanted to refresh his memory of *The Pilgrims' Progress*, read long ago in his youth, and displayed a deep interest in Christian Truth, which many Hindus, equally familiar with it intellectually and appreciative of it up to a point, never exhibit.

A rather younger fellow-casteman of his, living, as it happened, not many hundred yards away, has a beautiful English Bible, presented to him by the missionary doctor who operated upon him a couple of years ago, and there was no doubt that the inclination to study it had been aroused in him by the "love in action" he had experienced from the donor, when he was a patient in the mission hospital under his care, and by the general atmosphere of that particularly Christ-inspired place.

The conviction that a man or woman is a seeker is more often intuitive than based on any definite expression of faith or desire, though now and then it is admitted by such a remark as that of the Brahmin doctor who said he had been walking on the edge of a precipice between Hinduism and Christianity for twenty-two years, or of the bank clerk who testified to having been in a similar position for about half as long a period. More often, however, a certain wistfulness, or earnest questioning with no trace of argument in it, reveals that their attitude to Christianity is quite different to that of those, and they are many, who enjoy religious discussions in a detached, academic sort of way, without having the smallest interest in real spiritual truth.

Still more rarely one meets among the upper tenth of Indian society a man or woman who confesses to faith in Christ and dares to admit, "I am a believer," though unbaptized and probably not desiring baptism. Such a one, another doctor it so happens, who had come to faith in Christ before he went overseas on War service, took a deep interest in the Holy Places when in Palestine, getting a chaplain to act as his guide, but with this one exception he failed to meet any Christians with whom he could have spiritual fellowship and discuss Bible problems. He might well have been hopelessly put off by some of them, particularly by his superior officer, but God kept His child witnessing to his faith by his daily conduct, so that one day his commandant remarked upon the purity of his life and asked him how he managed it, to which he replied: "I pray to Christ for power."

This believer also shows the spirit of Christian love and self-denial in practical matters to a degree rare even among Christ's professed disciples, giving up eating anything at teatime while famine is threatening, or already present in our midst, and insisting that nothing but plain coffee should be served to the guests at a family function in his home.

A fellow-casteman of this Brahmin doctor, a senior official, without making any actual verbal confession of faith, gave unmistakable witness to it by filling his bookshelves with Christian books, mostly theological of the conservative, not the modernist, school of thought (which did not appeal to him), and by remarking, when a reference to Hinduism was made by a Christian visitor, "I am not interested in Hinduism." In



each place where he was stationed he got in touch with any missionaries in the neighbourhood and tried to find one who would give his wife piano lessons, concentrating upon hymns, and their favourites included that hymn so well-loved by Christians who have many burdens to bear in life, "What a Friend we have in Jesus."

Another middle-aged Brahmin, a lawyer, was first drawn towards Christianity by noticing the marked contrast between the courtesy shown to him by a Christian met on a bus journey and the lack of consideration or downright rudeness by some Hindu and Muslim fellow-passengers, and the kindly Christian would probably have been greatly surprised had he known that his small act of courtesy had made his Hindu neighbour feel that "he must know more about Christianity," and take to the earnest study of the Bible.

Among a party of college students, doctors or scoutmasters, experience goes to prove that there are generally some who gladly buy Gospels and English New Testaments, and sometimes the whole Bible is asked for. One recollects an occasion when the demand for New Testaments on the part of a group of students in camp exceeded the supply available and another time two students from the same college, a Muslim and a Hindu, came to the bungalow for more Christian literature. The Mahomedan showed special interest and friendliness and has since occasionally corresponded, adopting the writer as his "Auntie." Saddened and disheartened by family bereavements, may he come to realize that he needs, not a dead Prophet, but a living God—Who is able and willing to become his Saviour and Friend!

Some well-educated Muslim men show a greater willingness to read the New Testament and a deeper interest in the Christian message than their wives, though in the case of zenana pupils, believing wives and children are often hampered or opposed by husbands and fathers who are quite ignorant of or indifferent to it.

Parsees tend to be sharply divided into a majority who are completely satisfied with their own religion and very hard in their attitude towards Christian Truth, and a minority who appear to welcome it with particular warmth and give the impression of being "not far from the Kingdom." Such a one was a gentleman first met with his family in the train, who revealed in the course of conversation that he had always thought Christianity was a rather empty religion, of little practical value, till he spent six months once under the care of a most earnest and loving Christian doctor and observed how he sacrificed himself for his poor patients and how the free dispensary he opened for them was paid for and stocked with drugs in answer to believing prayer. From that time onwards the Parsee had become a student of Christianity, so deeply interested in Bible teaching on Christ's Second Advent that he had made copies of a large and comprehensive chart on the subject, two of which he gave to the writer, and year by year his Christmas greeting takes the form of a booklet of Bible verses and religious poems and quotations.

Now and then an unorthodox Hindu will frankly and spontaneously admit some defect he or she has realized in Hinduism, and one wonders how far a sense of dissatisfaction with their hereditary religion will incline them to seek for a better and purer one and so draw them to

Christ. The high-caste, highly educated secretary in a royal family remarked in the course of a conversation on the contrasts between Christianity and Hinduism, "Christianity teaches that God made man after His own likeness, but in Hinduism men have made gods after their likeness"—a great truth which fear of causing offence would have kept the writer from asserting herself. "Our gods set a shocking example to our young men. They wanted wives and concubines just as men do," said a lady social reformer, belonging to the most advanced section of those who, while completely rejecting idolatry, still call themselves Hindus.

"Your religion is simple, but ours is very complicated and difficult to understand," said a Brahmin gentleman after listening to the testimony given to Christ and His truth, while a boy prince, who had read something of the New Testament and heard verbally of the love of Christ, remarked that Christianity was a Religion of love, adding: "Our gods were cruel," and expressing his resolve to become a Christian when he grew up.

A Hindu girl college student, meeting the Christian friend who had given her a New Testament three years before, exclaimed: "I am reading the Bible you gave me every day and I love the Lord Jesus very much," but women and girls are seldom so outspoken as the menfolk, no doubt because hardly any of them are free agents, being completely under the rule of parents or husband till they become widows, and then still largely ruled by the brother or son upon whom they are economically dependent. Many children and Biblewomen's pupils confided in their teachers that they believe in and pray to the Lord Jesus, but among high-caste ladies, met once or only occasionally, one can usually only guess at their attitude to Christ and His Gospel by the expression of their faces as they listen to the witness given, the warmth of their welcome to their homes, and the type of questions they ask, betraying a deep spiritual interest in the Gospel, not merely a theoretical or academic one.

Sometimes even those who appear to be seekers will betray in conversation a lack of any true sense of personal need of a Saviour, as when a middle-aged lady, a social worker, who had bought an English New Testament for herself and four sets of the Four Gospels to present to friends, asked why we Christians should bother so much about sin; people like us were not really sinners, or words to that effect.

There are undoubtedly genuine seekers, however, among high-caste and highly educated Hindus, including some who lack the more intimate knowledge of Christianity possessed by former students of mission schools and colleges, and they, too, as well as more simple folk, sometimes give evidence of a longing for some servant of God to help them understand its truths. Such a one was an elderly Brahmin who so valued Christian education that he had had all his children educated in Christian schools. After listening thoughtfully to a simple exposition of some cardinal Christian truths, such as the relationship between God the Father and the Son and the salvation of Christ, offered as a free gift which cannot be bought or earned, but must be accepted—truths exemplified by illustrations from Nature and daily life—he enthusiastically exclaimed: "One might read the Bible all one's life and still



be like a man groping in the dark, but now I understand ! ” One was reminded of the Ethiopian Eunuch, rejoiced to have been privileged by God to play the part of a Philip to him, but grieved to think of how many there must be like him who are still “groping in the dark,” with no man to guide them to the Saviour. In many cases God has used His own Word, with no human interpreter, to guide seeking souls to Himself, but usually He seems to make use of human instrumentality as well, and through the influence and teaching of His servants lead on those whose desire for Him may have been originally awakened either by some other servant of His or some message direct from the Scriptures. The tragedy is that in so many places, indeed in vast areas in India and other lands, there is no one to lead such seekers to the Saviour, either because there are no Christians within reach, or because those there are belong to the category to which St. Paul referred when he said, “All seek their own, not the things which are of Jesus Christ,” to that class of professing followers of Christ who are set upon winning converts to their own particular sect, group or party, rather than on winning souls to a vital faith in Him, or the even more dangerous class of those who not only do not believe wholeheartedly themselves in the Faith once for all delivered to the saints, but seek to undermine such faith in others.

In these days, when many men and women everywhere are dissatisfied and disillusioned with regard to the efficacy of human efforts to set up the New World Order of their dreams, the Good News of the Divine Redeemer and King Who alone can and will eventually do it, and of His power to deliver from personal defeat and frustration in the moral and spiritual realm, awakens a response in many hearts, but how can they hear without a preacher ?

To contact seeking souls among the women and girls of India needs great numbers of consecrated Christian women who will give the whole or much of their time to seeking them out in their own homes, but much can be done among the men by those servants of God who are engaged in other forms of Christian service, or in so-called secular occupations, as they move about, travelling, calling on business at offices, and so on, so long as they have put themselves fully at God’s disposal, ready to be used of Him to anyone, anywhere, at any time, and never neglecting an opportunity He gives on the plea, “That isn’t my work ! ” The offer of a Gospel for sale, or a free pamphlet of the type acceptable to the well-educated, will often lead to the recipient revealing that he has a desire to know more of these things, and possibly asking for a further talk in his free time on some future occasion. The opportunities for such personal work are unlimited, if only we will recognize and use them.

It was a member of a primitive tribe who exclaimed, after hearing the Good News of Christ and His salvation : “How can we come to Jesus ? We don’t know the way. We’ve never seen Jesus, we’ve only seen you. You must lead us to Him,” but many educated and thoughtful men and women are obviously feeling this too, even though they may not express it in words. Where are the disciples of Christ who will respond to their call ?

# THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD —WHY MANGER?

(St. Luke's Gospel, Chapter Two)

By REV. ROLAND KOH\*

**I**N the Old Testament, here and there we come across accounts of customs which have parallels in China. For example, in 2 Sam. 3: 31, there is a record of a custom of wearing sackcloth for mourning. In China there is a similar custom. This sets us thinking of the possibility that, vice versa, some Chinese customs might help us to understand certain records in the Bible. There is an ancient custom in the Province of Kwangtung, South China, which has survived to this day, which concerns the birth of a child to the wife of a man who is not a direct male member of a family, or who is a stranger in a house in which he and his wife happen to live. I was aware of this custom long ago, but had not attached any importance to it until last year. In January last year, the Japanese army attacked the village in which our friends and we were staying. As the enemy drew near, we fled from this village and took refuge in another village some fifty miles away, safe from the Japanese. During this period of evacuation, two of our friends' wives were pregnant. They, like ourselves, were strangers or outsiders of the village. When the time came for delivery, the expectant mothers were asked by the village folk to leave the houses rented to them. There were no public inns or hospitals which are not affected by the custom and the problem became very serious. In the end, our friends had to rent a pig sty as a temporary maternity ward, and there the deliveries took place, one after the other.

Such a custom is undoubtedly based on superstition, the origin of which is the fear that a birth to a woman of a stranger will bring bad luck to the owner of the house. There is also the reason of uncleanness. Further, there is the fear based on a practical ground—the possible death of either the baby or the mother. I still remember very vividly how when I was a boy I was not allowed to go near to a relation who had just given birth to a child. It was considered, so I was informed, that I would become duli and stupid if I came near enough to inhale and absorb the air in the room in which that relation of mine was.

This custom came to my notice again recently. From the village where we took refuge we returned to Canton in the south of Kwangtung after Victory Day. My wife gave birth to a son a couple of months after our arrival. He is our first boy and our fourth child. My mother-in-law, having heard the good tidings, hurried out to see the grandson. She lives in a village a few hours by boat from Canton. She brought me a message from my father-in-law, who asked me again to go to see

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him in his village. He has been most anxious to see me again after about six years of separation. I informed my mother-in-law that I too was eager to go to her village, and that probably I would go as soon as my wife was fit to travel. I would also bring the wife and son along so as to allow my father-in-law an opportunity to see the newcomer. When I said this, I could see from her face that she was not too happy. She asked me to wait until after forty days from the date on which the baby was born, as a visit earlier than that might bring bad luck to her family. It was an old custom, she explained. So I allowed the plan to visit my father-in-law to drop, and even up to the time of writing this article I have not been able to find the spare time to make the trip to pay my respects to my father-in-law.

Before I would proceed to my next point, I would add here that this custom is not usually adopted by the modern-minded Chinese. Neither is it adopted by the Chinese Christians.

After having considered this custom in China, in relation to the birth narratives recorded in chapter two of St. Luke's Gospel, I believe that a similar custom existed in Bethlehem at the time of Christ. I appreciate that a custom in China does not necessarily prove that a similar custom did exist then in Bethlehem, but there are several points which seem worthy of consideration.

In the first place, from St. Luke's Gospel, we see that Joseph and Mary went from Galilee (Luke 2 : 4). When they reached Bethlehem, they tried to get a room in an inn. An inn is for the public. As pointed out, the custom in question in China does not affect a public place. So Joseph and Mary's attempt to get into an inn was quite regular as far as the custom concerning birth was concerned. It is worthy of note that when they failed to secure a room in the inn, they went straight to a stable. Why manger? Why not to a home in the village? Most people are sympathetic to people in such a condition. We cannot say that there was an entire absence of hospitality on the part of the local folk. Again, the fact that the inn was fully occupied would affect the other people who went there for the census. There is no record that these people also took up temporary quarters in stables.

Luke 2 : 22 is a strong point in favour of our theory. It says : " And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord." Here is a specific mention of the question of uncleanness. (See Leviticus, chapter 12).

Finally, the behaviour of the shepherds further strengthens our case. They came straight to the manger after having heard the good tidings from the angels. They saw a wonder and a fulfilment of the angel's announcement. Normally, we would expect them to make arrangements for Mary and our Lord to go to one of their homes where greater comfort could be obtained. We believe it was the result of custom that they did not do what in their hearts they would desire to do, to pay their homage to our Lord and Virgin Mary. To the simple-minded country folk, the force of custom is generally stronger than reason and the dictate of the heart.

## SOME FOREIGN MISSIONARY PERIODICALS

WITH the return of more normal international communications we have been receiving copies of foreign missionary periodicals which are of great interest and which show clearly the vitality of the missionary cause in many countries. A brief account of some recent publications may be of interest.

From Belgium come three periodicals, the *Revue Missionnaire de la Compagnie de Jésus*, published monthly, the *Revue Missionnaire des Jésuites Belges*, published six times a year, and *Le Bulletin des Missions*, which is a quarterly publication of the Abbaye de Saint-André-les-Bruges. The first of these is outstanding for the quality of its photographs and the excellence of its format. The numbers are each concerned with a particular territory and aim at giving a vivid picture of the people, their life and customs, against which is set an account of the work of the Belgian Jesuits. Thus the November issue is concerned entirely with Bengal and contains articles on Calcutta, the races of Bengal, Hinduism in Bengal and Christianity and Nepalese customs. The *Revue Missionnaire* seeks to act as a link between Roman Catholics in Belgium and their compatriots who are building up the Church in Bengal, Chota-Nagpur and the Congo, and consists chiefly of descriptive articles written by missionary priests. *Le Bulletin des Missions* is a scholarly quarterly, well-edited and printed in a manner so reminiscent of pre-war standards that it arouses some feelings of envy when contrasted with the austerity of English publications. Recent numbers contain articles on Bantu Philosophy, Predestination in the teachings of Islam, and on Félix Eboué and the new French colonial policy.

From France we receive the *Journal des Missions Evangéliques*, a monthly publication now in its 120th year. This is concerned with the work of the Société des Missions Evangéliques and is not unlike the publications of the various English Missionary Societies in its scope. America is represented by *The Moslem World*, a Christian Quarterly Review of current events, literature and thought among Mohammedans, published by the Hartford Seminary Foundation. There are English Associate Editors. This Quarterly is scholarly and important, and its articles contain much that no student of the Moslem world can afford to neglect. From Canada we receive *The Living Messenger*, which is the organ of the Women's Auxiliary to the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada. This is a monthly magazine. Though it is mainly concerned with "domestic" affairs it is a useful reminder of the extent of the missionary field in Canada itself.

The *Nordisk Missions Tidsskrift* (the Scandinavian Missionary Review) edited by the Bishop of Viborg, Denmark, has made a welcome reappearance. It is world-wide in its scope and the articles in the recent issue deal with important matters of missionary policy.



# REVIEWS

THE CANON LAW OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND : *Being the Report of the Archbishops' Commission on Canon Law.* S.P.C.K. 15s.

"At the present time the Church of England, alone among the Churches of the Anglican Communion, lacks a body of Canons which has been revised and supplemented in the light of modern conditions, and which is regarded as authoritative by its members."

This anomaly led to the appointment (in 1939) of a Commission to report on: (a) The present state of Canon Law . . . and (b) What method should be followed . . . to provide the Church with a body of Canons certainly operative. . . .

The need was clamant. For too long the Church of England has been complaisant about its own dislike of code law and its boasted genius for common sense; and such a mind pays no heed to its prestige as the Mother Church of a world-wide communion. All other Provinces have framed, know well, and honour, their Canons; but when they turn to the Canons of the Mother Church for pattern, their respect or affection are not enhanced by what they discover. The existing code opens (Canons 2 to 12) not with dignified definition of the Church, but with vindictive threat of excommunication, and moves on to forbidding the Clergy to have welts on their cloaks or to wear "any coif or wrought night-cap: but only plain night caps of black silk, satin, or velvet" (No. 74). Such is the law of to-day; and ridicule or lawlessness are the consequence. It ill befits the Mother Church to be so equipped, and, in this matter, to be without honour in other lands.

The Commission are confronted with a most formidable labour, and it is not easy to assess their success without using excited superlatives. The Report opens with an introduction in prose of a grace and dignity not often met to-day. It then cuts a way through the tangled jungle of ecclesiastical law with a sureness, a scholarship, and a lucidity which will place this book among the great writings of our Church. Moreover it achieves a further success in that it makes a study of canon law not only possible but fresh and attractive. Heretofore few, even among well-informed Churchmen, have had knowledge of the subject because of the difficulty of finding a way of approach; but now the door is opened wide for all who care to go through.

The Report then moves on to the second clause in its terms of reference, and here again praise and gratitude for the work can only be superlative. The argument develops with a learning, a clarity, and an authority which carries conviction that it is indeed showing the way by which "the Church may go forward with greater discipline, and greater cohesion and consciousness of inner strength, to the work of building up the people of our country in the Body of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

There follows the proposed "Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical." Review space does not allow of any examination of what is proposed.

Discussion will perhaps centre round what is omitted, for few will dispute that the suggested body of Canons is both living and comely. Especially comely; for the prose is now melodious and now sonorous and at times (as in Canon LXXXII) reaches moving beauty. There can be little doubt that if our Church can have the code here proposed we shall have something to honour and obey at once, and in time to love.

It has been suggested that debate may gather round what is omitted; and, as the EAST AND WEST REVIEW is concerned with the world-wide Anglican Church a plea may perhaps be allowed for two additions which do concern the whole Communion. The canons of many other Provinces say something about their relations with the Church of England. Surely therefore the Mother Church might well say something about her relations with other Provinces. One example will serve to show that this suggestion is no mere sentiment: if there had been a clear definition of the position the costly legal suit about the Capetown Bishopric would probably never have arisen. And there remain yet other anomalies overseas which someday will claim attention. Again nearly all other Provinces have canons about discipline. No doubt the Commission had good reason for attempting nothing about this in spite of the desire for a restoration of discipline expressed in the Prayer Book. But it is not always known in England that members of the Church in other Provinces who may come under discipline quote the example of the Mother Church and claim the same freedom from discipline, or ask why they should be disciplined while Englishmen living amongst them are not.

One more suggestion. The Report is enriched with a full bibliography which will be of lasting value to students. If therefore there should be further additions it is to be hoped that Lowther Clarke's "Constitutional Church Government in the Dominions and in other places beyond the seas" may be added.

The S.P.C.K. are to be congratulated on the format and printing, which are worthy of a work of such outstanding importance.

W. F. FRANCE.

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*WITH WHOM WE SERVE: The C.M.S. Review of the Year 1946-7.*  
C.M.S. 6d.

The emphasis in this review of the work of the C.M.S. is on the personal aspects. The author describes it as an interpretation rather than a report. "It shows how the Society, with its emphasis on the personal, is in action to-day at many of the points of human need most often in the news. The real test of its work, in any area of Africa and the East, is always a personal one—the quality of life it inspires in the individual and in the community." This is illustrated by many instances from all parts of the world, which show the magnitude of the Society's responsibilities and the opportunities which are open to the Church. In the short compass of 56 pages there is much to encourage and much for which to be thankful. But the Review also makes clear how inadequate are the resources, both personal and financial, which are available. This is a book to be read and pondered over.